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*Growth of English Industry and Commerce in Modern Times.* By W. CUNNINGHAM, D.D., Cambridge: University Press, 1892. 8vo., pp. 771.

THE present, second and concluding, volume of Professor Cunningham's important work on English economic history covers the three centuries since the accession of Elizabeth. Coming only a few years after his first volume, one is not surprised to find in it signs of hastiness and incompleteness. To compass the events and changes of the epoch marked by the rise and fall of the mercantile system and by the industrial revolution, within the limits of a single volume, is a task of no small difficulty. No one less skillful as a writer and less energetic as an investigator, than Dr. Cunningham could have accomplished the task in so short a space as three years. To have done it with a considerable measure of success is an achievement of importance. He can hardly, however, be said to have made the most of his opportunity. He certainly has not failed to produce a very interesting volume, but it is a volume that shows too clearly that very much more thought and labor must be expended in working separate parts of the field before such a book as he has set about to produce can be satisfactorily written. The present work is neither distinctively investigative nor altogether expository in character. It is an uneven mixture of both and reveals the inevitable defects of this method of treatment. At the same time, Dr. Cunningham's work will fill, after a fashion, a large gap in English economic literature, and will, no doubt, be itself the means of stimulating an increase of scholarly interest in English economic history such as will supply the shortcomings of the present work. If he has not himself written the economic history of England, he has, at least, the satisfaction of knowing that he has made it possible for others to write it.

The volume is divided into three books on, The Elizabethan Age, The Stuarts, and The Struggle with France. The last book, which fills about two-thirds of the whole volume, is divided into three parts, dealing respectively with the periods 1689-1776, 1776-1815, and 1815-1846; and gives by far the most satisfactory account we have of the rapid and far-reaching changes that set in toward the end of the eighteenth century. A certain mechanical regularity of treatment characterizes each of the three books. Each contains chapters on commerce, industry, agriculture, colonies, the poor, finance and

economic doctrine. The chapters on economic doctrine are especially good, not the least commendable feature of them being the copious extracts from writers and pamphleteers little known and less accessible to many students. It is when dealing with the history of opinion that Dr. Cunningham shows his real strength. He never treats it as a separate thing, but always in connection with the events and problems of the time. In this way he succeeds in infusing an element of color and vitality into the narration of events, and, at the same time, gives the reader a juster appreciation of the mercantalist and *laissez-faire* positions.

In a field so comparatively new and so abounding in rich material and unsolved, and largely untouched, problems, much had to be altogether neglected or else sparingly noticed. It is doubtful, however, whether the principle of selection adopted by Dr. Cunningham to guide him through the field will meet with general approval. His main object, he tells us, is to study the *growth* of English industry and commerce, and as "all growth means change we must concentrate our attention on the beginning of each change" (p. 5). "In so far as what was once new became habitual and regular and normal, it may surely be left out of sight" (p. 8). This method of treatment is very apt to expose a writer to the grave danger of mistaking mere change for growth and of leaving the reader with a very imperfect and one-sided view of the causes and direction of economic development. Fortunately, Dr. Cunningham sometimes departs from his proposed method and then we get some really valuable views of the larger features of England's economic development and the state of industrial society at some particular period. But in the main we get little general description or explanation, but much detailed and confusing information about all sorts of projects and schemes; as if these had made up the most important part of the economic activity of the people. Indeed, one is sometimes ready to suspect that Dr. Cunningham measures economic activity in terms of legislative activity. At any rate, his work becomes at times little more than a naked history of legislation, without any attempt to estimate the character or extent of its influence. The economic history of England during the three centuries when her policy was more or less completely under the domination of mercantilist ideas, may, no doubt, be treated very successfully from the standpoint of legislation. But unless this mode of approaching the subject is followed up by a careful effort to ascer-

tain what effect was exerted by the legislation on the actual course of development, the study may prove fruitless and even misleading. For, few chapters in the history of institutions are better calculated to show the limited effectiveness of legislation than the history of the mercantile system itself. Nothing is clearer than that the facts were frequently far different from what the law had intended they should be.

Dr. Cunningham says, those are doomed to failure who attempt to "explain the course of our history on the assumption that it has been dominated by the economic motives of self-interested individuals" (p. v). This may be; but this view is not so altogether apparent as to stand above the necessity of proof. For, however true it may be that under the sway of mercantilism the free play of economic motives was sought to be restrained by the legislation framed by men "who tried to do their duty," we have yet to learn that that system succeeded in supplying individuals with new motives. The history of the monopolies, patents, and trading companies, of class oppression, and rings and combinations to keep up prices, as told in the pages of Dr. Cunningham's own history, is evidence that the merchant of the seventeenth century was no less eager or unscrupulous in the pursuit of wealth than his present-day successor. The contrary assumption which underlies so much of Dr. Cunningham's explanation accounts for that perverse view which finds the potent cause of progress in legislation, and the material for an adequate understanding of economic history in Parliamentary proceedings. It is this method of dealing with the subject that leaves upon the mind of the reader of this volume an impression of crudeness and vagueness in spite of the evident signs of an industrious search for material, disclosed in the elaborate bibliography. The volume suffers not from dearth of matter but from lack of thought. The author's judgments are often hastily formed, hints too frequently take the place of careful explanation, and difficult problems are sometimes avoided by the skillful turning of a phrase. Many instances might be mentioned in which Dr. Cunningham bases his judgments upon insufficient data. To take an example from a portion of English economic history with which most readers are quite familiar. It may be regarded as an open question just what effect the Navigation Acts, which gave English ships a monopoly of the carrying trade of England and her colonies, had upon the decline of Dutch commerce and prosperity. The best evidence Dr. Cunningham finds for the opinion that the policy of crippling the shipping

of the Dutch succeeded, is the strong fear the Acts excited in Holland. A reference to DeWitt's *Interest of Holland* is the only authority cited in support of this view. But DeWitt, who saw the measure come into operation, simply expressed the general apprehension that was not unnaturally felt by the people at that time. It would be too much to deny that the Navigation Acts did not operate injuriously on the Dutch commerce, but it is, at least, a hasty judgment to conclude, without any attempt to test the contrary opinion of the author of the *Commerce de la Hollande*, that the Acts did it all.

A. C. M.

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*The Reciprocity Treaty with Canada of 1854.* By FREDERICK E. HAYNES, PH.D. Publications of American Economic Association, vol. vii., No. 6, November, 1892. 8vo., pp. 70.

THIS is a valuable contribution to American economic history. It gives a clear account of the treaty of 1854, showing the reasons for making the treaty, its action during the time it was operative, and its value to both countries.

The writer deals with the third and fourth articles of the treaty, the third being a list of the articles placed by both countries on the free list, the fourth giving Canada the right to use Lake Michigan and the state canals along the border, and in return granting the same rights on Canadian canals and the St. Lawrence to the United States. The reasons for making the treaty are first considered. Attempts to secure such a treaty before 1854 show that there was a "substantial movement behind it," and that it was not the product of merely momentary feeling, as is often supposed. Further causes leading to its adoption were the desire of England to put an end to a strong movement for annexation which had sprung out of commercial depression in Canada, as well as the wish of the United States to settle the troublesome fishery disputes.

The account of the way in which the treaty was secured is very interesting. The Senate was evidently opposed to it, but a ten days' social campaign, carried on by Lord Elgin, brought the treaty to a triumphant conclusion. The writer then passes to a consideration of the causes which led to the abrogation of the treaty, its operation being considered later. The financial necessities of the civil war were responsible for the abrogation, while the direct occasion was the bitter